



News Release

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE-FOREST SERVICE

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Release Date: April 13, 2011

Forest Service, partners gear up for annual Stikine River Birding Fest

WRANGELL, Alaska – Visitors from all over Southeast Alaska will migrate to Wrangell this spring for the Annual Stikine River Birding Festival, taking place April 28 through May 1, 2011.

Wrangell is the gateway community for the Stikine River Delta, where the arrival of thousands of American Bald Eagles creates the largest springtime concentration in North America. The festival is also the perfect opportunity for adventurous birdwatchers to observe millions of shorebirds, which migrate to the delta each spring. This delta lies within the Wrangell Ranger District of the Tongass National Forest.

This year's festival features guest artist Linda Infante Lyons, who will host student classes, an adult workshop, a public lecture, and an art exhibit. Weekend events include the Ducks Unlimited Banquet, guided bird walk with local author Bonnie Demerjian, talks by renowned Southeast Alaska naturalists Bob Armstrong and John Hudson, Sitka Raptor Center presentation, Muskeg Meadows Golf Tournament, and local arts and crafts fair. There will also be a Wrangell/Stikine Bird Photo Contest to encourage local birding.

Children's events include story time at Chief Shakes House, an archeology activity that involves painting Tlingit designs on cedar shingles, and a birdfeeder building workshop. Ambitious festival-goers can also take advantage of locally chartered day tours up the Stikine River to view birds, wildlife, and stunning wilderness scenery. For a complete schedule, please visit <http://stikinebirding.org/>.

Wrangell's Stikine River Birding Festival provides an ideal opportunity for all ages to celebrate 2011's spring migration. The festival is sponsored by the Tongass National Forest in partnership with the City and Borough of Wrangell, the Wrangell Visitors and Convention Bureau, Wrangell Public Schools, and local businesses and community organizations.

For more information contact the Wrangell Ranger District at 907-874-2323 or visit our website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/districts/wrangell/index.shtml>.